

The Dark Big 5 Psychological Theory of Personality: An Additional Member of the Dark Tetrad

by Dr. Christopher J. Sernaqué, EdD

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Author: Christopher John Sernaqué

Research Committee:

Research Advisor: _____

EIU/EBC Representative: _____

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Abstract: The Dark Triad, a psychological theory of personality, was first published by Professors Delroy Paulhus and Kevin Williams. This theory categorized and described three “dark”, or malevolent, personalities namely: Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and Psychopathy. Dr. Paulhus, along with Professors Erin Buckel, Paul D. Trapnell, and Daniel Jones, expanded the Dark Triad to the Dark Tetrad because they had added sadism to this collection of dark personalities. The Dark Big 5 Psychological Theory of Personality is an expansion of the work of Paulhus, Williams, Buckels, Jones, and others who have developed Dark Personality, or D-Factor, research.

The Dark Big 5 (DB5) Thesis maintains that there is another personality, the False Teacher (Ideologue/Dogmatist/Totalist) that is distinguishable from, but yet similar enough and sufficiently malevolent enough to be grouped with the Dark Tetrad of the Narcissist, Machiavellian, Psychopath, and Sadist, thus the Dark Tetrad is henceforth a Dark Big 5. Coupled with the idea that the Dark Tetrad is now a Dark Big 5 is the notion that fostering identity through understanding biological temperament and discovering personal ideals through self-authoring is a way for individuals to withstand, or recover from, encounters with members of the Dark Big 5.

Keywords: Dark Triad, Dark Tetrad, Dark Quartet, Dark Big 5, Dark Pentad, Dark Quintet, Narcissism, Machiavellianism, Psychopathy, Sadism, False Teacher, Ideologue, Totalist, Abnegation, Dogmatism, Conformity, Fanaticism, Sectism, cults, Simple Distilled System, Decision-Making Tool, Big-5, HEXACO, NERIS, malevolent, personality, personality traits, pathological pedagogy, introspection, ideas, ideals, identity, individuality

CHAPTER 1: Introduction

1.1 Historical Review:

The Dark Triad Psychological Theory of Personality was first published by Professor Delroy L. Paulhus and his co-creator Professor Kevin M Williams, both of whom are personality psychology researchers and have served as professors of psychology at the University of British Columbia, in the *Journal of Research in Personality* back in December of 2002. (1)

The Dark Triad, as summarized by humanistic psychologist Dr. Kaufman, “consists of narcissism (entitled self-importance), Machiavellianism (strategic exploitation and deceit) and psychopathy (callousness and cynicism).” (2) The *Open-Source Psychometrics Project (OSPP)*, a platform that has administered millions of open source psychometric assessments, has also encapsulated the Dark Triad by saying, “The dark triad personality traits are three closely related yet independent personality traits that all have a somewhat malevolent connotation. The three traits are machiavellianism (a manipulative attitude), narcissism (excessive self-love), and psychopathy (lack of empathy).” (3) The Encyclopedia Britannica likewise has another helpful summation of these traits stating that “The theory of the dark triad recognizes specific characteristics associated with each personality trait. Thus, Machiavellianism is marked by a tendency toward manipulative behaviour, narcissism by excessive self-importance and grandiosity, and psychopathy by callousness, impulsiveness, and thrill seeking.” (4) Dr. Peterson, a clinical psychologist and colleague of Dr. Paulhus, encapsulated the Dark Personalities in an interview. (5) Here are his definitions of the terms:

- Narcissistic: That means they want social status, that they deserve social status, and that they should get it without earning it.
- Machiavellian: Which means that they’ll manipulate other people instrumentally to get what they want, independent of the consequences for that person.
- Psychopathic: Which means they’re predatory and parasitical. Parasitical meaning they’re perfectly willing to use your work as means for their sustenance.

The triad is styled as being “dark” precisely because of this “malevolent connotation” the OSPP describes; malevolence, therefore, is a term vital to our understanding of the Dark Triad. The Oxford Language Dictionary defines malevolent to

mean, “having or showing a wish to do evil to others.” (6) Indeed, this defining malevolence is the reason why the triad members are described as a “cluster of three negative personality traits...that share certain features, including emotional coldness, duplicity, and aggressiveness.” (7) The remaining chapters of this thesis will further explore the nature of these Dark Personalities, how they can be quantified, and how one can exist optimally, so to speak, in a world that is home to such Dark Personalities.

1.2 The Darkness of the Triad:

The Dark Triad Psychological Theory of Personality deals with personalities that are categorized as “dark.” As the proceeding section outlined, these three personalities are classified together as “dark” precisely because their baseline characteristics, even down to their micro-routines, are malevolent. Dr. Minna Lyons, lecturer in psychology at the University of Liverpool, outlined the following description of how the Triad manifests this darkness:

“The ‘darkness’ of the Dark Triad consists simply of disagreeableness (antagonism, deceitfulness, dishonesty, and selfishness). As well as the aversive ‘core,’ some individuals high on the Dark Triad also present profiles that are characterized by psychological vulnerability—neuroticism, negative emotionality, and the inability to control emotions, which may lead to vulnerability to mental distress. Furthermore, some aspects of the Dark Triad are also associated with impulsivity and inability to wait for rewards, which can result in rash decisions that may put the individual in a risky position (e.g., crossing a busy road without a care for the traffic or having unprotected sex with a stranger).” (8)

These “disagreeable” and “averse” traits are of interest to psychologists in general, but these traits, when taken to an extreme manifestation, can sit at the intersection of multiple fields, like forensic psychology, private investigation, criminal justice, etc. To quote professor of psychology Dr. Kaufman, “We all know people who consistently display ethically, morally, and socially questionable behavior in everyday life. Personality psychologists refer to these characteristics among a subclinical population as ‘dark traits.’ An understanding of dark traits has become increasingly popular not only in psychology, but also in criminology and behavioral economics.” (9)

Professor Morten Moshagen, and his colleagues, conducted a study on Dark Personality, or D-Factor, traits, and they defined the “darkness” of D-Factor as follows:

"The basic tendency to maximize one's own utility at the expense of others, accompanied by beliefs that serve as justifications for one's malevolent behaviors." (ibid)

Dr. Kaufman further clarifies this definition by saying:

"In their definition, utility refers to goal achievement. For those scoring high on the D-factor, *utility maximization is sought despite running contrary to the interests of others or even for the sake of bringing about negative outcomes in others.*" (ibid) (emphasis mine)

In other words, members of the Dark Triad have their own machinations, and they are not afraid to *use, abuse, or refuse people* as the mechanisms to attain their machinations. Thus, the Triad is aptly called Dark.

CHAPTER 2: Literature Review

2.1 Testing the Triad:

As a psychological theory, the Dark Triad has been rigorously analyzed by psychologists and has proven to be a valuable psychometric because the Dark Triad is a personality model that specifically measures malevolent traits, i.e. "The Dark Triad attempts to capture manipulative, exploitative traits that are not represented by the Big 5, a five-factor model of the core traits of an individual's personality which is considered the most reliable and widely used model of personality to date." (10) There are valid open-source, or open-access, psychometrics that individuals and researchers using the interweb can complete like the "Short Dark Triad (SD-3)" that was developed by Dr. Paulhus, Dr. Dan Jones, and their colleagues (11) and is available on Open-Source Psychometrics which measures the three traits of machiavellianism, narcissism, and psychopathy. (12) There are other psychometric assessment tools that have been developed to test and measure each member of the Dark Triad individually, namely, the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI) which is used for narcissism (13), the MACH-IV for machiavellianism (14) and the Self-Report Psychopathy Scale (SRP) for psychopathy. (15)

Beyond these psychometrics, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5), is likewise useful for assessing the Dark Triad. (16) The DSM-5 defines Narcissism, or rather Narcissistic Personality Disorder, as a mental health condition that falls into the category Cluster B: "Cluster B disorders feature unstable emotional states and erratic behavior, which can involve aggression toward or manipulation of others." (17)

To return to Narcissistic Personality Disorder, the DSM-5 definition of the disorder is as follows: "Narcissistic personality disorder is a pattern of grandiosity, need for admiration, and lack of empathy." (16) The DSM-5 lists several characteristics, 9 to be exact, that indicate that an individual can be diagnosed with Narcissistic Personality Disorder. These diagnostic criteria include, "Is interpersonally exploitative (i.e., takes advantage of others to achieve his or her own ends)" and "Lacks empathy: is unwilling to recognize or identify with the feelings and needs of others." (ibid) Moreover, the DSM-5 highlights key characteristics; characteristics that truly define narcissism as follows:

"The essential feature of narcissistic personality disorder is a *pervasive pattern of grandiosity*, need for admiration, and lack of empathy that begins by early adulthood and is present in a variety of contexts." (emphasis mine) (ibid)

"The most useful feature in discriminating narcissistic personality disorder from histrionic, antisocial, and borderline personality disorders, in which the interactive styles are coquettish, callous, and needy, respectively, is the *grandiosity characteristic* of narcissistic personality disorder." (emphasis mine) (ibid)

Thus, the quintessential characteristic of narcissism is grandiosity. Dr. Abhimanyu Chandak, a neuropsychiatrist, recognizes grandiosity to be, "An unrealistic sense of superiority in which one considers themselves as superior and unique from others." (18)

The other two members of the Dark Triad, Machiavellianism and Psychopathy, while not being referenced in the DSM-5, share overlapping qualities with certain disorders that are, in fact, referenced in the DSM-5. Dr. Sheri Jacobson, a psychotherapist, reviewed an article by Andrea M. Darcy that recognized, to an extent, there is a commonality between Machiavellianism and Antisocial Personality Disorder (ASPD), i.e. "Personality disorders where sufferers might have the trait of Machiavellianism include antisocial personality disorder..." (19)

Antisocial Personality Disorder (ASPD) is a personality disorder characterized by a pervasive disregard for the rights of others, a lack of empathy, and a tendency to violate social norms. The DSM-5 characterizes Antisocial Personality Disorder as a persistent pattern of disregard for the rights of others, deceitfulness, impulsivity, irritability, and a lack of empathy. People with ASPD may engage in manipulative and

exploitative behavior, which overlaps with Machiavellianism to some extent because manipulative behavior and lack of empathy are Machiavellian traits.

Correspondingly, Antisocial Personality Disorder likewise shares overlapping qualities with Psychopathy. In fact, the DSM-5 explicitly states, "The essential feature of antisocial personality disorder is a pervasive pattern of disregard for, and violation of, the rights of others that begins in childhood or early adolescence and continues into adulthood. This pattern has also been referred to as *psychopathy*, sociopathy, or dyssocial personality disorder." (emphasis mine) (16)

The staff reviewed publications of the Psychology Today magazine concur stating, "Psychopathy is a condition characterized by the absence of empathy and the blunting of other affective states. Callousness, detachment, and a lack of empathy enable psychopaths to be highly manipulative..." (20) Psychopath' is not a mental health diagnosis; the disorder that most closely represents it in the DSM is antisocial personality disorder." (10)

None of this is to say that an individual who has been diagnosed with Antisocial Personality Disorder automatically falls within the Dark Triad, rather, this is to say that the DSM-5, the "standard classification of mental disorders used by mental health professionals in the United States" can be of utility in understanding the Dark Triad. (21) This is important to note because, as the most current diagnostic manual, it further solidifies the objectivity of the Dark Triad theory of personality.

By the same token, Antisocial Personality Disorder has distinctions that separate it from the Dark Triad personalities. The DSM-5 explicitly distinguishes Antisocial Personality Disorder from Narcissistic Personality Disorder:

"Individuals with antisocial personality disorder and narcissistic personality disorder share a tendency to be tough-minded, glib, superficial, exploitative, and lack empathy. However, narcissistic personality disorder does not include characteristics of impulsivity, aggression, and deceit. In addition, individuals with antisocial personality disorder may not be as needy of the admiration and envy of others, and persons with narcissistic personality disorder usually lack the history of conduct disorder in childhood or criminal behavior in adulthood." (16)

Likewise, the dark personalities of Machiavellianism and Psychopathy, while sharing traits that overlap in commonality to some extent with Antisocial Personality Disorder, do not automatically constitute ASPD disorder, as they differ in some respects,

i.e. those with ASPD "may repeatedly perform acts that are grounds for arrest (whether they are arrested or not), such as destroying property, harassing others, stealing, or pursuing illegal occupations." (ibid)

In a 2020 study, researchers used a variety of psychometric tools, including the Two-Dimensional Mach-IV Scale, Five-Factor Narcissism Inventory-Short Form, and Triarchic Psychopathy Measure, to investigate how the Dark Triad traits relate to moral disengagement and DSM-5 AMPD maladaptive traits. Their findings revealed that the Dark Triad traits can be substantially described in terms of AMPD profiles, with maladaptive traits explaining 27% of the variance in the Dark Triad factor even when controlling for moral disengagement. This highlights that the Dark Triad traits are likely to share a common core of antagonistic maladaptive personality traits, further solidifying their clinical and theoretical relevance. (22)

It can thus be said that the Dark Triad personality model is a rigorous model that measures malevolent traits and has a strong basis in the clinical literature of personality, psychometrics, and the DSM-5.

2.2 The Characteristics of the Dark Triad:

The psychometrics, NPI Inventory, MACH-IV, and SRP, all analyze the characteristics of the dark personality traits. The section on the "Darkness of the Triad" defined the term "dark" as it relates to personality, however, a succinct definition of the term "dark" is simply that to have a dark personality is to be anti-human in some respect; to be anti-human is to "willfully degrade and destroy other human beings." (23)

The Dark Triad traits..."People with these traits tend to be callous and manipulative, willing to do or say practically anything to get their way. They have an inflated view of themselves and are often shameless about self-promotion. These individuals are likely to be impulsive and may engage in dangerous behavior—in some cases, even committing crimes—without any regard for how their actions affect others." (24)

Dr. Judy Ho, a triple board-certified neuropsychologist, provides a comprehensive overview of the Dark Triad, a set of three interrelated but distinct personality traits—psychopathy, narcissism, and Machiavellianism. These traits have been extensively studied, especially in criminal populations, but Dr. Ho highlights that individuals with these traits are also present in community settings where they can cause significant interpersonal and societal disruption without necessarily engaging in criminal behavior. Psychopathy is marked by a profound "lack of empathy and morality"

(25), narcissism is characterized by “a need for admiration, a grandiose sense of self-importance, and a belief that one is superior to others” (26), and Machiavellianism “is a dark personality trait in which someone is manipulative, cunning, and will do anything to reach their goals.” Despite their overlaps, Dr. Ho asserts that these traits remain distinct constructs, contributing uniquely to what she describes as a potential personality style. (25)

Dr. Ho characterizes a narcissist as someone who “Cannot accept they are ‘normal’ and not ‘special.’” and as someone who would “Wreak havoc when they don’t get the attention they think they deserve.” (26) She characterized a Machiavellian as someone who would “perceive themselves as being smarter than the average person” and ask, “Well if I’m smarter than the average person, what kind of thing can I get away with?” (27) Lastly, she described psychopathy as the “darkest of the dark triad traits” because “generally a person who has a high psychopath score on a psychopath test will do more damage to people in the world than people who are called “High-Mach” High Machiavellianism trait or high narcissist traits.” She highlights how signs of psychopathic behavior, such as “cruelty to animals or cruelty to other children” can be seen in early childhood. She makes mention of their thrill-seeking behavior stating, “They tend not to really understand consequences and sometimes they may even laugh at the face of a consequence.” (28)

Dr. Darlene Lancer identified the Dark Triad Types like this: “Narcissism is characterized by the pursuit of ego gratification, vanity, a sense of superiority, grandiosity, dominance, and entitlement. Machiavellianism is marked by manipulation – a calculating, duplicitous, and amoral personality, focused on self-interest and personal gain. Psychopathy is distinguished by callousness, impulsivity, and enduring antisocial and bold behavior.” (29)

She comments on research mapping the Dark Triad onto the Big 5 Personality test saying, “All three types (narcissism to a lesser degree) scored low on agreeableness, measured by the Big Five personality test that assesses extraversion, neuroticism, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness. Agreeableness differs from charm and charisma. It involves trustworthiness, unselfishness, straightforwardness, compliance, kindness, and modesty, which are essential for good relationships. Machiavellians and psychopaths are more lacking in conscientiousness. (Why work when you can cheat and steal!) Psychopaths have the lowest level of neuroticism or negative emotions, which makes them the most sinister. Predictably, narcissists were more open and much more extroverted. Openness correlates with evidence that narcissists tend to be creative.” (ibid)

Thus, Dr. Lancer would concur with the original findings of Professor Delroy L. Paulhus and Professor Kevin M Williams when they mapped the Dark Triad onto the Big 5 and found, "Their only common Big Five correlate was disagreeableness. Subclinical psychopaths were distinguished by low neuroticism; Machiavellians, and psychopaths were low in conscientiousness; narcissism showed small positive associations with cognitive ability. Narcissists and, to a lesser extent, psychopaths exhibited self-enhancement on two objectively scored indexes. We conclude that the Dark Triad of personalities, as currently measured, are overlapping but distinct constructs." (30)

Dr. Lancer expands on this research on how the Dark Triad relates to the Honesty-Humility dimension of personality, from the HEXACO model of personality developed by Dr. Ashton and Dr. Lee. As expected, the Dark Triad personalities score low on the honesty-humility (H-Factor) of personality: "All three personalities lack honesty and humility, which includes sincerity, faithfulness, lack of greed, and fairness. A study of cheating revealed that all three cheat when the risk of getting caught is low. When the risk is high, psychopaths and Machiavellians (when their energy for thinking is low) cheat. Both will intentionally lie. Narcissists have high levels of self-deception rather than intentional dishonesty." (29)

2.3 A Precedent for Additions and Expansions of the Triad Theory:

Two decades have elapsed since the publication of the Dark Triad as a theory on the "dark" or malevolent aspects of personality, and since then, there have been other psychological researchers who have evaluated, analyzed, and have sought to expand their work. For instance, in 2015, Dr. Janko Međedović and Dr. Boban Petrovic of the Institute of Criminological and Sociological Research, published the Dark Tetrad theory of personality in the *Journal of Individual Differences*. The Dark Tetrad postulates expanding the Dark Triad to include the trait Sadism. In the abstract of their work, Dr. Međedović and Dr. Petrovic wrote, "Machiavellianism, narcissism, and psychopathy are personality traits understood to be dispositions toward amoral and antisocial behavior. Recent research has suggested that sadism should also be added to this set of traits...We conclude that sadism behaves in a similar manner as the other dark traits, but it cannot be reduced to them. The results support the concept of 'Dark Tetrad.'" (31)

The Dark Tetrad (or Dark Quad) addition of sadism to the dark personalities adds another dimension to categorizing D-Factor traits. All four of the dark personalities share overlapping attributes: "Those with high Dark Tetrad personality scores tend to be malicious, exploitative, ruthless, and mean. They typically hold themselves in high esteem and do whatever it takes to get what they want. Dark Tetrad personalities score

low on traits of emotionality, honesty, humility, conscientiousness, and agreeableness.” (32) Or, as Christine Hammond (MS, LMHC) put it, “The Dark Tetrad shares two major characteristics: extreme selfishness and a lack of empathy for others. This combination affords the ability to cause harm and abuse others in a variety of ways without any regard for the feelings, safety, or morality of the victims.” (33)

The staff of the popular Psychology Today provides the following definitions for each member of the Dark Tetrad (32):

- Narcissism: A belief that one is special, particularly gifted, obsessed with themselves and that they are superior to others.
- Machiavellianism: A tendency to see people as a means to achieve one's own goals.
- Psychopathy: A condition characterized by a lack of affective empathy and the willingness to exploit others.
- Sadism: The tendency to derive pleasure from the pain or humiliation of others.

Dr. Paulhus and his colleagues captured the essence of the Dark Tetrad members in a single term: “The 28-item SD4 was administered with euphemistic labels for each subscale: special for the narcissism items; crafty for the Machiavellianism items; wild for the psychopathy items; mean for the sadism items.”

Indeed, personality research on dark personalities is fruitful, even spawning a spectrum of personalities that ranges across dark personality traits and light personality traits. The Light Triad Scale was developed by Scott Barry Kaufman, David Yaden, Elizabeth Hyde, and Eli Tsukayama (35) Dr. Glenn Geher, summarized the Light Triad as detailed below (36):

- Faith in Humanity—or the belief that, generally speaking, humans are good.
- Humanism—or the belief that humans across all backgrounds are deserving of respect and appreciation.
- Kantianism—or the belief that others should be treated as ends in and of themselves, and not as pawns in one's own game

In light of these expansions and additions, it is evident that the Dark Triad has provided a strong foundation for continued exploration into the dimensions of personality, particularly in the realm of malevolent traits. The introduction of the Dark

Tetrad and the subsequent development of the Light Triad exemplifies the adaptability and relevance of the Triad framework in evolving psychological research. These expansions demonstrate that the field of personality research is dynamic, with a well-established precedent for integrating new dimensions and frameworks to deepen our understanding of human behavior. This precedent not only validates past modifications but also encourages further innovation and refinement, paving the way for future contributions to the study of both dark and light aspects of personality.

CHAPTER 3: Updated D-Factor Theoretical Framework

3.1 The Dark Big 5:

The Dark Big 5 (Dark Pentad, Dark Quintet) Thesis posits the inclusion of a fifth personality type, the False Teacher (Ideologue/Dogmatist/Totalist), alongside the established Dark Tetrad of Narcissist, Machiavellian, Psychopath, and Sadist. This addition is based on the premise that the False Teacher exhibits traits and malevolence comparable to those within the Dark Tetrad, warranting its recognition as an equally detrimental personality construct. This ideological dimension introduces a critical perspective on the interplay between personal malevolence and broader social influence, necessitating its integration into the framework. Consequently, the framework evolves from the Dark Tetrad to the Dark Big 5, encapsulating a broader spectrum of harmful traits. The following section delineates the characteristics of the False Teacher and presents predictions regarding its psychological and behavioral implications.

Psychologists have long recognized the importance of worldview in shaping human behavior, with various schools of thought acknowledging its influence on moral and ethical decision-making. As Pritchard et al. (2019) argued, "Results indicate that worldview beliefs were better predictors of ethical decision-making than race, age, or gender, a finding that was consistent across both the student and practitioner samples reported." (37)

G.K. Chesterton noted, "the most practical and important thing about a man is still his view of the universe" (Chesterton, 1905). (38) Worldview, which encompasses an individual's overarching beliefs, values, and interpretations of the world, has been shown to affect not only personal identity but also interpersonal interactions and social dynamics. Koltko-Rivera (2004) argued that these frameworks exert a powerful effect on cognition and behavior in individuals and have the potential to actively cue moral recognition and shape judgments of an ethical issue's acceptability. (41)

While worldview undeniably shapes the beliefs and values of individuals, the label of “False Teacher” does not stem from the content of their worldview or ideology, but rather from the malevolent way in which they teach and spread their ideas. This distinction is crucial, as it highlights that it is not the specific beliefs or values that define the False Teacher, but the harmful methods they employ to persuade, influence, and exploit others—their malevolence lies in how they wield their worldview to exert power over others.

Furthermore, the term “False Teacher” does not refer to a teacher who makes occasional mistakes or one who presents theories that are currently the best available, despite being potentially invalid. Nor does it describe a teacher who takes pride in their subject or teaching method, or one who is simply uncomfortable with being corrected. It is not used to label a teacher who is particularly argumentative or engages in debates. Instead, the label “False Teacher” is reserved for those whose teaching is marked by a fundamental malevolence, characterized by an unwavering belief in their own worldview as the only valid one, and a manipulative drive to impose that worldview on others. The False Teacher seeks to dominate, control, and coerce others into adopting their perspective, rather than fostering genuine intellectual engagement or openness to correction.

It is important to note that one does not have to be a teacher to embody the traits of the False Teacher. While the label “False Teacher” may initially suggest a role within education or instruction, the core characteristics of this dark personality can manifest in any individual who rigidly holds and aggressively promotes a single, unyielding worldview. Therefore, the terms “Ideologue”, “Dogmatist”, or “Totalist” are equally fitting descriptors for this personality type. These individuals are driven by an intense conviction that their perspective is not only the correct one but the only acceptable perspective, and they exhibit a strong desire to impose it on others. Whether in politics, religion, social movements, or personal relationships, a False Teacher (Ideologue, Dogmatist, or Totalist) seeks to suppress alternative viewpoints, demanding conformity and often resorting to coercion or manipulation to enforce their beliefs. The key trait of the False Teacher is not their position or profession, but their rigid, authoritarian stance toward their ideology and their aggressive drive to make others adopt it.

The False Teacher is a dangerous and insidious figure, often operating in educational, religious, or ideological spaces where they exploit their platform to manipulate, control, and dominate the thoughts and actions of others. As aforementioned, rather than simply holding strong beliefs, the False Teacher seeks to impose their worldview upon others with a fervor and intensity that can be both

disorienting and damaging, though they operate behind a facade of knowledge, authority, or moral superiority.

However, as one delves deeper into the workings of the False Teacher, five key characteristics emerge that distinguish them from others who may hold strong ideological views but do not use manipulative or malevolent methods to teach them.

These characteristics, or the *Five False Frameworks*—Abnegationism, Conformism, Dogmatism, Fanaticism, and Sectism—serve to form the framework of their ideological possession. They are the mechanisms by which the False Teacher subjugates their followers and ensures the perpetuation of their influence, often to the detriment of the individual's personal autonomy, critical thinking, and social relationships. The following sections outline and explore these five characteristics in greater detail, examining how each contributes to the toxic power dynamic the False Teacher seeks to create.

3.2 The Five False Frameworks:

Abnegationism:

Abnegation refers to the False Teacher's belief that the world revolves around their worldview, and their expectation that others should either attune themselves to this worldview or entirely abandon their own in favor of it. To define this concept more clearly, it embodies what the Cambridge Dictionary defines as "the act of not allowing yourself to have something, especially something you like or want," as followers are pressured into denying themselves the comfort, identity, and stability that their cherished beliefs once provided. (40) At its core, this characteristic is grounded in the False Teacher's conviction that their perspective is not just one among many, but the only valid one.

However, abnegation is not merely an intellectual persuasion; it is a demand for submission. From the False Teacher's perspective, the act of willingly surrendering one's previous beliefs or worldview is a mark of loyalty and validation, further reinforcing their authority. This process requires the act involves the painful process of self-denial, where followers must sacrifice aspects of their identity and the very things that were once precious to them. In this way, it is not simply a matter of intellectual persuasion; it is a coercive demand that followers give up everything they once valued, including personal beliefs and cherished perspectives, to submit to the leader's worldview.

As Dr. Robert Jay Lifton observes, "The individual person who finds himself under such doctrine-dominated pressure to change is thrust into an intense struggle with his

own sense of integrity, a struggle which takes place in relation to polarized feelings of sincerity and insincerity. In a totalist environment, absolute "sincerity" is demanded; and the major criterion for sincerity is likely to be one's degree of doctrinal compliance—both in regard to belief and to direction of personal change." (41) In this environment, the follower's sense of self is systematically dismantled to align with the False Teacher's demands.

By placing their worldview at the center of the universe, the False Teacher creates a worldview trap that forces others to either accept their ideology or reject themselves as they once were. Dr. Darcia Narvaez explains this dynamic, stating, "To determine whether or not an ideology or belief system is totalist depends on structure and function. The structure is exclusive, allowing no other truths, affiliations, or interpretations. No dissension is allowed against the leader's word. The function of the belief system is multiple: to maintain the leader's absolute control, to establish rigid boundaries between group members and the outside world, to justify loyalty, and to prevent escape." (42) Thus, the structure of abnegation is designed to isolate and control followers, while its function ensures their complete dependence on the False Teacher.

The dynamic introduces an existential layer of suffering, as this rejection of one's past self adds an existential dimension to the pain of abnegation, as followers feel compelled to erase and rebuild their identity in line with the False Teacher's rigid, unyielding doctrine. In such a framework, dissent is seen not just as a difference of opinion but as a personal affront to the truth the False Teacher professes.

The pressure to conform to this single, rigid worldview is overwhelming and is often accompanied by guilt or fear of ostracization for those who resist. Those who refuse to comply are often subjected to guilt, shame, or the fear of being ostracized, further compounding the emotional and psychological toll of abandoning what was once integral to their sense of self. Ultimately, the False Teacher's goal is not merely submission but a complete transformation of the follower's beliefs, forcing them to reject everything that once defined their identity in favor of the rigid, unyielding doctrine they present as absolute truth. The result is a relentless pressure to conform, which leaves followers feeling trapped and emotionally drained.

Conformism: The demand for conformity goes beyond the personal act of accepting the False Teacher's worldview—it extends to the coercion or pressure placed upon others to adopt the same views. This demand is not passive; rather, it manifests as a forceful imposition of their rigid worldview on anyone within their sphere of influence, leaving no room for divergence or independent thought. To provide context,

Cambridge Dictionary defines conformism as “the fact or policy of behaving or thinking like everyone else, rather than being different.” (43) In essence, deviance from their worldview is precisely what the False Teacher cannot tolerate.

As a result, the False Teacher’s influence is not limited to those who passively listen and believe; they actively seek to convert and, in some cases, forcibly convince others to embrace their worldview. This process often involves a combination of tactics, such as social pressure, emotional manipulation, or even direct threats. As the research staff of Psychology Today explains, “Conformity can take the form of overt social pressure or subtler, unconscious influence.” (44)

To further this pressure, the False Teacher may use guilt, fear, or shame to encourage conformity, punishing those who fail to comply or attempting to break down their resistance. In the False Teacher’s worldview, there is no room for dissent; no one is allowed to hold beliefs that contradict their teachings. In extreme cases, they might go so far as to ostracize those who refuse to conform, labeling them as ignorant, misguided, or even dangerous.

This dynamic often results in a toxic environment where independent thought and open dialogue are stifled, leaving followers trapped in an ideological echo chamber. As noted by the American Psychological Association, this level of conformity can deeply impact an individual’s external and internal state: “Conformity includes temporary outward acquiescence (compliance) as well as more enduring private acceptance (conversion).” (45)

By the time followers fully embrace the echo chamber, they will have internalized the False Teacher’s worldview to the point where it becomes indistinguishable from their own beliefs. This leaves little room for dissent or critical examination, ensuring the False Teacher’s influence remains pervasive and unquestioned.

Dogmatism: Dogmatism in the context of the False Teacher is defined by an unyielding dogmatism that treats their worldview as not just a belief but the absolute truth, or at the very least, the closest approximation to it. To clarify, as defined by the Cambridge Dictionary, dogmatism involves “stating your opinions in a strong way and not accepting anyone else’s opinions.” (46) In practice, the False Teacher takes this to an extreme, asserting their views with such unshakable certainty that any challenge to them is dismissed as either ignorant, malicious or even heretical.

In their framework, there is no room for nuance, no allowance for discussion, and certainly no tolerance for opposing perspectives. For the False Teacher, their word is

final, and they may even go so far as to suggest that to question them is an immoral act. This unyielding stance underscores that the False Teacher is characterized by an unwavering belief in the absolute truth of their ideological worldview. As a result, this dogmatism is central to their dark personality, shaping not only their interactions with others but also their perception of reality. For the False Teacher, their beliefs are not just personal opinions; they are the definitive answer, beyond question or debate. To this end Christopher Bergland, Ph.D., warns, "Dogmatic people may be less likely to resolve uncertainty by seeking new facts. When we blindly adopt a religion, a political system, a literary dogma, we become automatons. We cease to grow." (47)

This dogmatism frequently manifests in a rigid, unyielding adherence to a singular belief system, where their worldview is presented as an absolute and unquestionable truth. They may repeatedly assert their views with such certainty that they refuse to even consider the possibility of error or alternative perspectives. This may appear in their communication style, using authoritative language and absolute statements that leave no room for doubt or nuance. Moreover, they often employ binary thinking, categorizing ideas and people as either fully aligned with their views or entirely wrong, with no middle ground.

Such an approach also impacts the False Teacher's interactions in their interactions with others, as they may express frustration or anger when confronted with opposing viewpoints, further reinforcing the closed nature of their belief system. In this way, the False Teacher's dogmatic certainty can be particularly dangerous because it discourages critical thinking and intellectual growth. Followers of the False Teacher may feel compelled to silence their doubts and accept teachings without question, unable to recognize the inherent dangers of such an authoritarian approach to knowledge and truth. As Dr. Lifton aptly noted, "Doctrine Over Person: This sterile language reflects another characteristic feature of ideological totalism: the subordination of human experience to the claims of doctrine." (41)

Fanaticism: Fanaticism is a defining characteristic of the False Teacher's strategy. Cambridge Dictionary defines fanaticism as, "extreme beliefs that may lead to unreasonable or violent behaviour." (48) In this context, the False Teacher seeks not just followers, but disciples—people who are fervently devoted to their cause. This devotion goes beyond intellectual agreement with the worldview; it demands an emotional and psychological investment in the False Teacher's ideas. Thus, followers are encouraged to view the False Teacher's beliefs as sacred, superior to any other sources of knowledge, and worth defending at all costs. The False Teacher often works to make their worldview seem like a life-or-death matter, framing it as the ultimate source of meaning, purpose, and identity. As a result, those who follow the False Teacher may be

encouraged to reject knowledge from other sources—be it science, history, or philosophy—viewing it as corrupt or irrelevant compared to the False Teacher’s teachings.

Forsaking your worldview becomes a form of penance because the False Teacher’s worldview is not just *an answer*, *their* worldview is *the answer*, and they expect you to know that and passionately make sure others know that too. In fact, “There is the demand that one confess to crimes one has not committed, to sinfulness that is artificially induced, in the name of a cure that is arbitrarily imposed.” (41) This intense pressure creates a dangerous dynamic in which followers are willing to sacrifice their autonomy, relationships, and even moral integrity in the name of loyalty to the False Teacher’s cause.

Consequently, the False Teacher expects fervorous devotion to their worldview, an experience which is exhausting to the recipient. Again, to quote Dr. Lifton, “And if no peak experience occurs, ideological totalism does even greater violence to the human potential: it evokes destructive emotions, produces intellectual and psychological constrictions, and deprives men of all that is most subtle and imaginative—under the false promise of eliminating those very imperfections and ambivalences which help to define the human condition. This combination of personal closure, self-destructiveness, and hostility toward outsiders leads to the dangerous group excesses so characteristic of ideological totalism in any form. It also mobilizes extremist tendencies in those outsiders under attack, thus creating a vicious circle of totalism.” (41)

Sectism: Sectism is the final, and perhaps most insidious, characteristic of the False Teacher. The Webster’s Revised Unabridged Dictionary defines sectism as, “Devotion to a sect,” a sect being “A number of persons who, following a teacher or leader, hold certain opinions; a following,” as stated by The Winston Simplified Dictionary. (49, 50) This trait involves the shunning and exclusion of those who do not subscribe to the False Teacher’s worldview, which, in turn, creates an insular group of followers that grows increasingly isolated from the broader society. As a result, the False Teacher encourages followers to see their group as superior to all others, and to view those who do not share their beliefs as enemies, outsiders, or even threats. For instance, the False Teacher may describe the outside world as a place of spiritual or intellectual contamination, reinforcing the notion that those who disagree are enemies or threats to the group’s survival or values. Dr. Lifton aptly puts it, “The totalist environment draws a sharp line between those whose right to existence can be recognized, and those who possess no such right.” (41) The False Teacher is a dark personality that persecutes.

In this environment, the False Teacher's worldview becomes a tool for dividing people, not just intellectually, but emotionally and socially. Followers are urged to abandon relationships, sometimes even with family members, that might conflict with the teachings of the False Teacher. This often involves cutting ties with those who disagree or pushing followers to sever familial and social bonds in favor of greater ideological purity, which ultimately isolates them from potential sources of support or alternative viewpoints. As Dr. Alexandra Stein explains, "Encouragement to cut ties with family or friends, unless you can recruit them... Those who do leave are shunned. They become the enemy, or objects of pity." (51)

Through this process, the False Teacher's sectism fosters an environment of intense loyalty within the group. However, this loyalty comes at the cost of personal relationships and the ability to engage with diverse perspectives. Furthermore, it reinforces the power of the False Teacher, as they become the ultimate authority within this enclosed world, leaving followers isolated from outside influences that might challenge their beliefs.

3.3 The Nature of the Five False Frameworks:

The False Teacher's dark personality is marked by Abnegationism, demanding others abandon their beliefs and identities; Conformism, enforcing rigid uniformity; Dogmatism, insisting on the infallibility of their worldview; Fanaticism, driving extreme devotion; and Sectism, fostering exclusivity and division. These interconnected traits suppress individuality, stifle critical thinking, and isolate followers, creating a climate of control and dependency that consolidates the False Teacher's dominance.

Each of these traits is distinct, yet they operate in tandem to reinforce the False Teacher's control. Abnegationism strips followers of their selfhood, making them more susceptible to Conformism, which demands alignment with the group. Dogmatism legitimizes this control by presenting the False Teacher's beliefs as unchallengeable truths, while Fanaticism fuels the emotional intensity needed to sustain loyalty. Finally, Sectism ensures isolation from outside influences, creating a closed system where these dynamics thrive. Together, they form a self-sustaining cycle of manipulation and domination.

Together, these five aspects form a unique dark personality construct that offers valuable insights for research into manipulation and authoritarian influence. Their interconnected nature creates a framework for understanding how False Teachers exploit psychological vulnerabilities to maintain power. This construct not only deepens

our comprehension of harmful leadership dynamics but also provides a basis for developing strategies to identify, counter, and prevent such exploitation.

3.4 The False Teacher and the Dark Tetrad:

The False Teacher is indeed distinguishable from the other four Dark Personalities—Narcissism, Machiavellianism, Psychopathy, and Sadism—based on their fundamentally different focus and methods of influence. While the Dark Tetrad traits primarily concern themselves with manipulating, exploiting, and gratifying personal impulsive desires, the False Teacher's primary aim is the imposition of their ideological worldview.

Unlike the Dark Tetrad, which revolves around manipulation, lack of empathy, and cruelty, the False Teacher introduces an ideological dimension, characterized by dogmatic belief systems, coercive conformity, and sectarian behavior. While there is significant overlap between these traits in terms of manipulative tendencies, it is the False Teacher's intense focus on ideological control that sets them apart. This ideological drive is not merely about personal gain but about enforcing conformity to a worldview, regardless of its potential harm to others.

Indeed the Dark Tetrad, as Narcissism, Machiavellianism, Psychopathy, and Sadism may involve manipulative behaviors, but they are not defined by a strict intolerance of dissent or rigid belief systems. Furthermore, while the Dark Tetrad traits may manipulate or exploit others for personal gain, the False Teacher seeks to indoctrinate, persuade, or coerce others into adopting and maintaining conformity to their belief system.

The False Teacher's insistence on ideological control contrasts sharply with the more opportunistic nature of the Dark Tetrad, where manipulation is typically for self-interest or immediate gratification, rather than the establishment of a strictly controlled belief system. Moreover, the False Teacher's resistance to new ideas is particularly pronounced, demonstrating an unwillingness to entertain alternative viewpoints, a level of closed-mindedness not as deeply ingrained in the other members of the Dark Tetrad, who may, at times, be more flexible in their approach to manipulation and achieving their goals.

To put it in the context of a "Psychometric Murder Mystery", so to speak, each dark personality trait leads to specific motivations for extreme actions. The Narcissist would kill you because you bruised their ego, driven by their excessive self-importance and need for admiration. The Machiavellian would kill you because you were a pawn to

sacrifice, reflecting their strategic, manipulative nature and willingness to exploit others for personal gain. The Psychopath would kill you because "why not?"—stemming from their impulsive, thrill-seeking, and callous nature. The Sadist would kill you because inflicting pain brings them pleasure, showcasing their sadistic delight in others' suffering. Finally, the False Teacher would kill you because they believe the world has room enough only for their worldview, driven by their authoritarian need to impose their beliefs and eliminate anything perceived as a threat to their control. Each motive reflects the core traits that define these destructive personalities.

3.5 The Dark Personalities and the False Teacher

The False Teacher and Narcissism: Unlike Narcissism, which revolves around a belief in one's inherent superiority and specialness, the False Teacher's narcissism is ideological rather than personal—seeking to elevate their worldview as the only correct one. They demand that others not only accept but wholly surrender their previous beliefs in favor of the False Teacher's version of truth. This characteristic of Abnegation distinguishes the False Teacher from Narcissism, which is more concerned with personal admiration and validation.

The False Teacher's focus is not on being admired for their own sake, but on controlling the narrative and imposing their ideology upon others. They manipulate their followers by positioning themselves as the sole authority, often framing any opposition as ignorance or even moral failure. Through this lens, the False Teacher is not seeking respect for themselves because their drive is rooted in ideological manipulation rather than personal validation.

The False Teacher and Machiavellianism: In contrast to Machiavellianism, which uses people as tools for achieving personal objectives, the False Teacher's manipulation is more ideological, aimed at molding others' beliefs and thoughts. Machiavellians might view others as expendable resources, but the False Teacher views them as subjects to be indoctrinated into a rigid belief system, with Conformity being a central mechanism for enforcing that indoctrination.

This makes the False Teacher's tactics more ideologically insidious, as their power comes from convincing followers that conformity to their worldview is not only necessary but virtuous. In this way, the False Teacher is less concerned with exploiting people for personal benefit and more focused on molding them into loyal disciples who adhere strictly to their ideological framework, often using guilt, fear, or moral superiority as tools to enforce conformity and suppress dissent.

The False Teacher and Psychopathy: While Psychopathy is marked by a lack of empathy and a willingness to exploit others for personal satisfaction, the False Teacher's coercion is not about personal pleasure or gain but about enforcing ideological purity. Psychopaths often disregard the emotional welfare of others for their own benefit, but the False Teacher seeks to control the emotional and intellectual landscapes of others, using pressure and Fanaticism to ensure unwavering devotion to their cause.

While psychopathy is driven by thrill-seeking, impulsive behavior, and callousness, the False Teacher's actions are fueled by a calculated, ideological mission. Psychopaths manipulate for personal gain or excitement, often without regard for harm, while the False Teacher seeks a rigid worldview. Their lack of empathy is not necessarily rooted in indifference to the suffering they cause, but in their overriding commitment to ideological purity. The False Teacher manipulates others' beliefs through pressure and fanaticism, not for personal pleasure, but to achieve conformity. Unlike psychopaths who exploit for gain, the False Teacher aims to reshape others' thoughts and emotions to align with their ideology.

The False Teacher and Sadism: Finally, unlike Sadism, which finds joy in the suffering or humiliation of others, the False Teacher is more focused on creating a devout following through Sectism—excluding and shunning those who resist or question the belief system they promote. The False Teacher's cruelty is not necessarily sadistic in the traditional sense but rather ideological and social, as they aim to isolate and ostracize non-believers to maintain control over the group. This process of exclusion is a significant departure from Sadism's pleasure in harm, focusing instead on the social dynamics of control and the purity of the ideological sect.

Unlike Sadism, which thrives on inflicting pain for personal enjoyment, the False Teacher's cruelty is rooted in the need to purify and control. Their focus is not on deriving pleasure from the suffering of individuals, but on maintaining ideological conformity within a group. The False Teacher seeks to silence dissent and cast out those who challenge their worldview, using social exclusion and shunning as tools to reinforce loyalty and unity. While Sadism is motivated by an internal desire to cause harm for personal gratification, the False Teacher's actions are driven by a calculated effort to shape and dominate the belief system of their followers.

3.6 Ideological Agenda vs Flexible Morality

Individuals with Dark Tetrad traits—narcissism, Machiavellianism, psychopathy, and sadism—often exhibit a blatant disregard for morality. Research indicates that these

traits are “socially malevolent personality traits” associated with “more flexible moral reasoning and behavior.” (52)

For instance, a study published in *Current Psychology* found that moral disengagement mediates the relationship between Dark Tetrad traits and harmful behaviors like cyberbullying. (53) Additionally, individuals with high levels of these traits tend to view others as mere tools for personal gain, further diminishing their concern for moral principles. (54) This lack of moral consideration is a common thread among those with Dark Tetrad traits, making them more likely to engage in manipulative, exploitative, and harmful behaviors without remorse.

Unlike the flexible or non-existent moral fiber of Dark Triad individuals, the False Teacher operates under a rigid and ever-present “moral code.” The term “moral code” is used in quotations because the actions deemed “moral” by the False Teacher are arbitrary in that morality is what the False Teacher defines it to be.

Ultimately, the False Teacher's defining characteristic is their commitment to imposing a singular worldview through manipulation, coercion, and exclusion, which differentiates them from the more self-serving and emotionally detached motives seen in the other Dark Personalities.

CHAPTER 4: Methodology

4.1 The False Teacher Self-Test:

The following self-test is designed to help evaluate an individual's alignment with the characteristics commonly associated with the “False Teacher” personality. This dark personality type is defined by a rigid, uncompromising approach to worldviews, and persecution of those who do not conform to their beliefs.

The False Teacher personality is defined by five core traits: Abnegationism (the rejection of alternative worldviews), Conformism (the imposition of uniformity), Dogmatism (unquestionable certainty in one's beliefs), Fanaticism (extreme dedication to a cause), and Sectism (the social isolation and persecution of dissenters). These traits collectively form an ideological framework that can foster intolerance, exclusivity, and a lack of empathy for differing perspectives.

By rating each statement on a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), an individual can identify areas where their tendencies might align with these behaviors.

An individual's responses will provide insight into areas of their thinking or behavior that may be influenced by a need for ideological purity or control. Upon completion of the False Teacher Self-Test, the user can refer to the scoring guide to determine where they may fall on the spectrum of alignment with the False Teacher characteristics.

4.2 Self-Test for the False Teacher Characteristics

Below are statements corresponding to the five characteristics of the False Teacher. For each statement, please rate how accurately it reflects your beliefs or behavior using the following scale:

1 = Strongly Disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Neutral

4 = Agree

5 = Strongly Agree

Abnegationism

1. I believe my worldview is the only valid one, and others should either adopt it or abandon their own.
2. When others hold different beliefs, I feel personally affronted and compelled to change their views.
3. I see any dissent from my worldview as an attack on the truth I uphold.
4. I think that those who do not share my views are simply misguided or inferior.
5. I expect others to conform to my beliefs, as I believe they are the only correct ones.

Conformism

1. I believe others should adopt my worldview and often pressure them to do so.
2. If someone disagrees with me, I feel the need to convince them, even if they resist.
3. I use guilt or shame to encourage others to agree with my perspective.
4. I feel frustrated or angry when others do not conform to my views.
5. I have actively cut ties with people who refuse to accept my worldview.

Dogmatism

1. I am absolutely certain that my worldview is the truth, and I do not entertain the possibility of being wrong.
2. I dismiss any challenge to my beliefs as either ignorant or malicious.
3. I believe there is no room for debate or discussion about my views.
4. I believe questioning my views is immoral or an affront to truth.
5. I discourage others from critically evaluating my worldview.

Fanaticism

1. I see my worldview as the only valid source of meaning and purpose in life.
2. I expect others to be deeply committed to my beliefs, even beyond intellectual agreement.
3. I encourage others to reject information from other sources in favor of my teachings/beliefs.
4. I believe my worldview is worth defending at all costs, even if it means sacrificing personal relationships.
5. I perceive my cause or beliefs as being the most important, almost life-or-death in nature.

Sectism

1. I believe that those who do not share my worldview are enemies or threats.
2. I encourage others to sever ties with and/or mistreat people or institutions that do not align with my beliefs.
3. I consider my group or ideology superior to all others.
4. I feel that those of a different worldview should be excluded from my social circles.
5. I push those in my circle to isolate themselves from those who might challenge their beliefs.

Scoring Guide:

15-25: Low alignment with the False Teacher characteristics

26-40: Moderate alignment with the False Teacher characteristics

41-55: High alignment with the False Teacher characteristics

56-75: Extremely high alignment with the False Teacher characteristics

This self-test provides insight into an individual's tendencies related to the False Teacher characteristics. A higher score may indicate a stronger inclination to adopt the behaviors and beliefs associated with the False Teacher, which could suggest an authoritarian or dogmatic approach to ideologies.

4.3 DB5 and FTST Results:

In this study, I sought to explore the conceptualization and perceived malevolence of the False Teacher personality construct relative to the Dark Tetrad traits: Narcissism, Machiavellianism, Psychopathy, and Sadism. A total of 50 randomly selected individuals participated in this investigation. Each of the participants was assigned a unique identifier ranging from 1 to 50, and a non-duplicate random number generator was employed to determine their grouping.

The initial subset, comprising 20 individuals, was selected using the first 20 numbers generated. These participants were administered the False Teacher Self-Test (FTST) alongside definitions of each of the five dark personalities, and a survey designed to assess the efficacy of the FTST.

The FTST can be seen in the previous section, so I will not reproduce it here as not to be redundant. Regarding the definitions, the following definitions of the D-Factor traits were given to the cluster of 20:

- Narcissism: A belief that one is special, particularly gifted, obsessed with themselves and that they are superior to others.
- Machiavellianism: A tendency to see people as a means to achieve one's own goals.
- Psychopathy: A condition characterized by a lack of affective empathy and the willingness to exploit others.
- Sadism: The tendency to derive pleasure from the pain or humiliation of others.
- The False Teacher: A tendency toward dogmatic behavior and fanatical extremism, where perceived non-conformity must be persecuted.

Additionally, as aforementioned, each of the the 20 individuals taking the False Teacher Self-Test was also given the survey question:

"On a scale of -10 to 10, how effectively do you feel the test described the core traits of the False Teacher personality construct? With -10 being entirely ineffective and 10 being entirely effective."

For the first question, the 20 participants had said:

(7, 9, 8, 8, 8, 6, 9, 8, 7, 9, 7, 10, 9, 8, 8, 7, 8, 9, 7, 8)

CHAPTER 5: Findings and Applications

5.1 Discussion on the FTST

In other words, most participants rated the test as effective, with the majority of responses clustering around 7 to 10. The mode of this data set was 8, which is indicative of the fact that most of the participants found that the test was effectual. However, this study would benefit from having a larger, and less homogenous, sample size. A increased sample size is likely to show more variation in data, furthermore, even though they were of different demographics, the participants were all college-graduates from an honor society who had volunteered, to participate. The homogenous nature of the group likely influenced the result clustering, even though they each completed both the FTST and accompanying survey virtually. Studies with larger sample sizes and otn other aspects of this dark personality construct are warranted to expand this theory.

5.2 Localized and Large Scale Applications of the False Teacher:

I would argue that the False Teacher construct can serve as a viable sociological interpretive schema and that it represents a new take on the older publications on totalist behavior. From my own anecdotal experience, I have found the Five False Frameworks to be a better explanation for the behavior of certain individuals and organizations, as opposed to the other Dark Tetrad types. I contend in the following that the Five False Frameworks could potentially serve as valid lenses through which to view power differences.

The Dark Tetrad types can sometimes land themselves in positions of power, however, just as “everyday” Sadism can show up as cyberbullying or trolling, the characteristics of the False Teacher dark personality construct can show up in a localized context. Essentially, the overarching impetus of the False Teacher is to do all in their power to impose their ideological framework and systematically undermine other viewpoints because they have elevated their own preferences to the level of ethical standards.

5.3 Localized (Minor Power):

Abnegationism reveals itself in how the False Teacher dismisses or outright rejects opposing perspectives, even in casual conversations. For example, during a workplace discussion about current events, the False Teacher might quickly shut down colleagues’ ideas by dismissing them as lacking understanding or ethical merit because

the False Teacher has a hard time tolerating nuance. Again, to be clear, a False Teacher is not necessarily a religious individual, nor is their behavior limited to any one system of belief. An individual could manifest False Teacher dark traits in settings as common as a book club, where they insist that their interpretation of the book, and their interpretation alone, is the only manner in which to view the book, even subverting what the author themselves has said about the book.

In a localized setting, the False Teacher still expects others to align with their views, as per Conformism. Imagine if you will a familial setting, where a relative critiques other family members who seem to be deviating from their prescribed norms or traditions. Again, while a set of traditions is a normal part of a healthy culture, I would argue that the False Teacher elevates traditions or even the way they see traditions, over people. The False Teacher's need for conformity can turn routine activities, like dinner gatherings, into subtle coercion about parenting styles, dietary choices, career paths, etc.—praising loved ones who adhere to their ideals while making pointed remarks or even resorting to shaming, those who do not.

The dogmatic tendencies of the False Teacher can make them sound like a broken record in team meetings or in family discussions because of their inflexible certainty about their framework. When a False Teacher comes face to face with evidence that contradicts their perspective, they may ignore the evidence, engage in deflection, or accuse those presenting the evidence of failing to understand the “bigger picture.” The dogmatic behavior of the False Teacher trait can be particularly maladaptive because it discourages dialogue and stifles intellectual curiosity, which are two hallmarks of a genuine learning experience.

Fanaticism, not healthy passion, is the best way to describe False Teacher's unrelenting zeal, which can border on obsession. For example, a False Teacher might volunteer for events in their local community or workplace projects, not out of a genuine desire to contribute but as a platform to promote their ideology. The totalist viewpoints of the False Teacher come with a price tag, for themselves and their zealots as they sacrifice personal relationships, neglect self-care, or overextend themselves in pursuit of their mission. The fanatical obsessions of the False Teacher are unlike the obsessions of an individual with Obsessive-Compulsive, or other cluster C, disorders in that the False Teacher is not distressed by their obsessions, even though they might be time-consuming, such as spending hours creating social media content to bash a family member with a different view of parenting.

Trait sectism becomes evident in how the False Teacher creates divisions within their social circles. For example, after a False Teacher reaches the conclusion that an

associate is a perceived threat to their viewpoint, they might spread rumors about that dissenting friend, framing them as untrustworthy or harmful to the group's cohesion, i.e. persecution in the form of reputation destruction. In a more professional setting, a False Teacher might opt for finding ways of excluding their colleagues from discussions or projects, effectively isolating them as "outsiders." The False Teacher, unlike the Narcissist who believes they need to associate only with the "best", or the most high-status individuals, does not care who is within their circle, so long as they share their ideological vantage point.

This framework was relevant in my own life when I had an unfortunate encounter with an individual who seemed to have the dark characteristics of the False Teacher, albeit on a localized scale. I had attended a concert and was wearing a pink-red frock coat that had a beautiful golden pattern on it. The individual sitting behind me felt the need to inform me that they viewed my appearance as "unusual" to which I responded, "Actually, I feel fantastic!" not wanting to be insulted, but not wanting to prolong an argument. My casual response should have ended the conversation, but they persisted demanding to know what I did as a profession. I decided to respond honestly saying, something along the lines of, "I am a teacher and a therapist; I love what I do!" At this point, my interlocutor launched into a bizarre tirade about how he viewed psychologists as malevolent people getting into people's heads and that everything in psychology was unproven. Even though I informed him about the validity of biological temperament psychometrics, it was almost as if he did not hear me and he continued insisting all psychology was "witchcraft", or something along those lines. When I tried to discuss neurological findings with him, he looked at me somewhat startled before sputtering, "You mean, with the brain???" Indeed, with the brain, and it was at that moment when it became distinctly clear that he had zeal, but no knowledge of the subject. He was simply leveraging his viewpoint, not caring for accuracy or truth. No amount of persuasion could convince him otherwise, and so I excused myself from his presence.

5.4 Localized (Moderate-Power)

A False Teacher given a position of power would seek to wield that power, not to bring honor to themselves, but honor to their ideological framework, even forsaking power to place whom they view as better mouthpieces for their particular ideology. For example, as a school principal, might seek to force abnegationism, through top-down directives, and enforce a particular pedagogical method, even though that method might not be suited to all teachers. That self-same school principal would gladly get poor marks on district reviews, a blow to their reputation, so long as their preferred pedagogical method is what is enforced and would likely only change their behavior if they believe it better suited the totalist view that has enraptured them. In a more

political connotation, envision a town board member. A False Teacher given some kind of municipal power might suppress any project or proposals that do not align with their beliefs, framing such ideas as threats to the community's integrity or unity. By doing so, they create an environment where alternative worldviews are invalidated and marginalized.

The False Teacher in a position of moderate power would not only demand attestation to their views but seek to pressure and/or coerce others to adhere to their prescribed norms and beliefs. For instance, to refer to an education setting again, a school teacher who has a totalist mentality might insist on rigidly following their interpretation of curriculum content and penalizing students who approach topics creatively or express dissenting viewpoints, i.e. they are the personification of the "by the book." In politics, a mayor or town official might implement policies designed to homogenize public behavior or values, leaving little room for individual expression.

Dogmatism amplifies their belief in the infallibility of their views. In a moderate position of power, the dogmatism of the False Teacher shows up as an unwillingness to compromise or adapt to new information and leveraging their power to keep their conversions alive. The key to the dogmatism of the False Teacher is that their worldview persists, not because truth compels it to do so, but because of their personal refusal to allow their tradition, unhealthy or not, to subside. To refer to a school teacher example again, this might look like a teacher who absolutely refuses to update their teaching methods or acknowledge advances in their field if they perceive them as conflicting with their established approach and using their seniority to squelch up-and-coming approaches.

The fanatical dedication of the False Teacher can also end up creating an imbalance of priorities in their life because their excessive zeal ends up making them pursue ideological crusades, instead of focusing on their task at hand. A False teacher expends their energy instilling their personal beliefs in students, not for critical thought exercises, but with the hopes that their pupils will adopt the same manner of thinking they have. Returning to the political realm again, a False Teacher in a mayoral position might fixate on their own pet project that falls within the scope of their worldview, even if it diverts resources from the true issues at hand for their community, or ignores the issues they were elected to fix.

Finally, the five false framework trait of sectism becomes evident as the False Teacher isolates those who fail to conform to their ideology and excludes dissenters from meaningful participation. A False Teacher, within the educational sphere, might openly favor students whose values mirror their values while taking lengths to ostracize,

discipline, or both, students who do not. This can create a classroom climate of exclusion and division. In a political role, they may form an inner circle of loyal supporters while sidelining or discrediting colleagues or constituents who challenge their policies.

When given a moderate position of power, the False Teacher leverages their authority to create environments steeped in ideological rigidity and control. Their behaviors, driven by Abnegationism, Conformism, Dogmatism, Fanaticism, and Sectism, not only impact those directly under their influence but can also ripple outward and ensure their power is used not to serve a diverse group but to enforce a narrow vision, often at the expense of what truly means something, like collaboration, diversity, and progress.

5.5 Largescale (Maximal Power):

When an individual with a False Teacher dark personality is elevated to a position of significant power—such as a president, dictator, or executive—their core traits: Abnegationism, Conformism, Dogmatism, Fanaticism, and Sectism, now operating on a much larger scale, influencing entire populations, organizational cultures, or national policies and result in oppressive environments, systemic control, and widespread social and cultural ramifications

In a major position of authority, the False Teacher's abnegationism becomes institutionalized and ensconced in society. They reject alternative worldviews not only personally but also structurally, shaping policies, laws, and systems to exclude or suppress dissenting perspectives. For example, a False Teacher dictator might ban political opposition, censor media/news outlets, or imprison journalists who challenge their narrative or question their totalist viewpoints. These dark ideologue characteristics, in a corporate executive let's say, could show up in the form of stifling innovation by dismissing new ideas, imposing rigid corporate policies that mirror their personal vision, and marginalizing employees who suggest alternative approaches. On a national scale, the dark trait of abnegationism couches diversity of thought as a threat to stability.

A False Teacher, in a position of maximal power, can enforce their conformist tendencies all throughout the institutions they lead or to the populations they govern. Take for instance a president with totalist characteristics who might use propaganda and state-controlled education to instill uniformity in beliefs, values, and behaviors—all the while framing compliance as patriotism or moral duty. They may mandate public adherence to specific ideologies, religious practices, or economic strategies, often

rewarding loyalty, punishing dissent, and outlawing non-conforming views. In a corporate setting, an executive pressures employees to the point where they feel they are compelled to mirror the leader's values, otherwise their non-conformity could result in career stagnation or termination. Conformism, at this level, enforces what the False Teacher sees as pure ideological homogeneity, though it is really erasing both individuality and innovation.

Dogmatism is amplified in positions of great power, where the False Teacher finally gets to enforce their unyielding beliefs as absolute truths, asserting that their policies are the only path to national prosperity. This dark character trait could even be to the detriment of the totalist because their unwanted close mindedness could make them ignore the advice of their experts, dismiss international norms that do not suit their worldview, or even go so far as to rewrite constitutions to better suit with their ideological convictions. Similarly, an ideologue executive could demonstrate trait dogmatism by making decisions in a unilateral fashion, or by disregarding market trends or shareholder concerns, and by believing their vision is infallible. Dogmatism, as manifested by the False Teacher, erodes checks and balances, as the False Teacher surrounds themselves with sycophants who validate their decisions rather than challenge them.

Fanaticism drives the False Teacher to prioritize their cause above all else, often to the detriment of broader organizational or national interests. A dictator might allocate vast resources to ideological projects—such as militarization, cultural purges, or architectural vanity projects—at the expense of public welfare. In a less high-stakes example, we could return to the corporate world for an example of how fanaticism might drive an executive to obstinately pursue a single product line or policy, even if the market does not reflect that strategy or employee well-being suffers. In a fanatical environment, the False Teacher expects zeal from others, and those around them either need to manufacture a semblance of passion or find themselves alienated because they cannot measure up.

Sectism becomes a pervasive force under the False Teacher's rule, isolating dissenters and consolidating their power. At the height of their power, say in a dictatorship, a False Teacher might seek to establish a secret police task force, enforce surveillance, and promote loyalty oaths while encouraging citizens to rat out on those who don't belong. They may create an elite inner circle, granting privileges to loyalists while excluding or persecuting perceived enemies. Again, to use a corporate or everyday example, an executive that scores high in traits sectism is likely to create, or at the very

least encourage the formation of, cliques within their organization, which would further fractionate the organization between members who align with, and members who do not align with, the worldview of the False Teacher.

In positions of maximal power, the False Teacher dark personality wields their authority to enforce a rigid, exclusionary vision on a massive scale. Through Abnegationism, they strip away alternative perspectives; through Conformism, they demand uniformity; through Dogmatism, they establish their beliefs as unassailable truths; through Fanaticism, they dedicate themselves obsessively to their cause; and through Sectism, they isolate and persecute dissenters.

5.6 The False Teacher and the Nazi State

The Nazi state under Adolf Hitler serves as a chilling embodiment of the False Teacher dark personality construct. This construct, defined by the traits of Abnegationism, Conformism, Dogmatism, Fanaticism, and Sectism, encapsulates the ideological, social, and moral decay that enabled the Third Reich's rise and atrocities during World War II. By examining the traits inherent to the False Teacher construct, it becomes evident that the Nazi regime's oppressive and totalitarian character aligns uniquely with this framework, distinguishing it from other dark states dominated by Machiavellianism, Narcissism, Psychopathy, or Sadism. The Nazi state's systematic rejection of alternative worldviews, imposition of ideological uniformity, and the weaponization of fanaticism illustrate the necessity of the Dark Big 5 model, which includes the False Teacher as an essential addition to understanding the complexities of such regimes.

Abnegationism: The Rejection of Alternative Worldviews

At the core of the Nazi ideology was the absolute rejection of alternative worldviews. The regime's propaganda machine, led by Joseph Goebbels, systematically dismantled competing ideologies and perspectives. The Nazis labeled Jews, communists, and other groups as existential threats, portraying them as antithetical to the Aryan ideal. This abnegationism went beyond mere disagreement, as dissenting views were eradicated through book burnings, censorship, and mass arrests. The infamous Nuremberg Laws codified this rejection, stripping Jewish people of their rights and humanity.

The Nazi state exemplified abnegationism by presenting its worldview as the sole source of truth and legitimacy. The indoctrination of youth through the Hitler Youth movement further illustrates this point: "That children would be involved in the Nazi

regime was clear from the beginning. As Adolf Hitler put it at the annual Nazi party rally in 1935, "He alone who owns the youth gains the future." (55) This statement underscores the regime's success in obliterating alternative perspectives from the minds of the young, replacing them with a monolithic, fanatical belief in Nazi ideology.

Conformism: The Imposition of Uniformity

The Nazi state thrived on the imposition of uniformity, mandating adherence to its ideological tenets across every sphere of life. This conformism was evident in the rigid structures of Nazi organizations, where individuality was subsumed under the collective identity of the Volk. Schools, workplaces, and social organizations were transformed into tools of indoctrination, ensuring that citizens not only adopted but actively demonstrated their loyalty to the regime. To quote the Encyclopedia Britannica, "In almost every respect it was an anti-intellectual and atheoretical movement, emphasizing the will of the charismatic dictator as the sole source of inspiration of a people and a nation, as well as a vision of annihilation of all enemies of the Aryan Volk as the one and only goal of Nazi policy." (56)

The Hitler Youth provides a clear example of this enforced uniformity. Membership in the organization became compulsory, ensuring that young Germans were molded into ideological clones. Through activities that glorified military discipline and racial purity, the regime instilled conformity as a societal norm. Those who resisted, whether due to religious convictions or personal beliefs, faced severe repercussions, ranging from ostracism to imprisonment. The Nazi regime's success in homogenizing its citizenry reflects the Conformism inherent in the False Teacher construct, where ideological purity is prioritized above all else.

Dogmatism: Unquestionable Certainty in Beliefs

Dogmatism was a defining feature of the Nazi state. Hitler's worldview, as outlined in *Mein Kampf*, was presented as an unassailable doctrine: "Hitler added to Pan-Germanic aspirations the almost mystical fanaticism of a faith in the mission of the German race and the fervour of a social revolutionary gospel. This gospel was most fully expressed in Hitler's personal testament *Mein Kampf* (1925–27; "My Struggle"), in which he outlined both his practical aims and his theories of race and propaganda." (ibid)

This dogmatism permeated Nazi propaganda and education, where any deviation from the party line was treated as heresy. The regime's unyielding certainty in its racial

theories, despite their pseudoscientific basis, justified some of the most heinous acts in human history, including the Holocaust.

The Nazi state's dogmatic approach left no room for debate or critical thinking. Party officials and ordinary citizens alike were expected to accept Nazi ideology without question. Those who voiced doubts were often silenced through intimidation or execution. This unwavering certainty in their beliefs enabled the Nazis to rationalize their actions, no matter how monstrous, as necessary for the preservation of the Aryan race. This dogmatism aligns closely with the False Teacher personality, which seeks to suppress any form of questioning to maintain absolute control.

Fanaticism: Extreme Dedication to a Cause

Fanaticism was the lifeblood of the Nazi state. Hitler's speeches and propaganda fueled a fervent dedication to the Nazi cause, fostering a culture of unquestioning loyalty and sacrifice. The Hitler Youth movement exemplifies this fanaticism, as young Germans were groomed to prioritize the Nazi ideology above their own lives. The quote from *Hitler Youth* highlights this devotion: "Adolf Hitler was impressed when he heard the battle reports about soldiers like Emil Durr. 'The youngsters who come from the Hitler Youth are fanatical fighters', he said proudly, 'These young German lads, some only sixteen years old...fighter more fanatically than their older comrades.'" (57)

This fanaticism extended beyond the battlefield. Ordinary citizens became complicit in the regime's atrocities, often out of a misplaced sense of duty or zeal. Teachers, doctors, and civil servants used their positions to further Nazi goals, demonstrating the pervasive nature of this fanaticism. The False Teacher construct encapsulates this trait, where extreme dedication to a cause overrides moral considerations and individual autonomy.

Sectism: Social Isolation and Persecution of Dissenters

Sectism was perhaps the most devastating trait of the Nazi state, manifesting in its systematic persecution and isolation of dissenters. The regime created a society where loyalty to the Nazi ideology determined one's social standing and survival. Jews, Romani people, disabled individuals, and other marginalized groups were dehumanized and excluded from society, culminating in their extermination during the Holocaust. "Anti-Semitism was fundamental to the party's ideology and led to the Holocaust, the systematic, state-sponsored killing of six million Jews and millions of others." (58)

The Nazi state also turned citizens against one another, encouraging them to report neighbors and family members who exhibited disloyalty. This culture of fear and suspicion fractured communities, ensuring that dissent was swiftly and ruthlessly punished. Moreover, Hitler's worldview served as the basis for the entire societal hierarchy: "Thereafter, Hitler's word was the supreme and undisputed command in the party. Its vast and complex hierarchy was structured like a pyramid, with party-controlled mass organizations for youth, women, workers, and other groups at the bottom, party members and officials in the middle, and Hitler and his closest associates at the top wielding undisputed authority." (57) The social isolation enforced by the Nazi regime reflects the Sectism inherent in the False Teacher construct, where control is maintained by alienating those who challenge the group's ideology.

CHAPTER 6: The Dark Big 5 D-Factor Traits Model

6.1 The Necessity of the Dark Big 5 Model

While other dark personality constructs, such as Machiavellianism and Sadism, provide insights into the mechanisms of authoritarian regimes, they fail to capture the unique ideological and social dynamics of the Nazi state. The False Teacher construct, with its emphasis on abnegationism, conformism, dogmatism, fanaticism, and sectism, offers a comprehensive framework for understanding the Third Reich. Unlike Sadism, which focuses on deriving pleasure from harm, or Machiavellianism, which emphasizes manipulation for personal gain, the False Teacher construct captures the Nazi state's singular focus on ideological purity and social control.

The Nazi regime's reliance on propaganda, indoctrination, and systematic exclusion demonstrates the centrality of the False Teacher personality. By adding the False Teacher to the Dark Big 5 model, a more nuanced understanding of such regimes is possible, highlighting the interplay between ideology, power, and social manipulation.

The Nazi state stands as a harrowing example of the False Teacher dark personality construct in action. Its rejection of alternative worldviews, enforcement of conformity, dogmatic certainty, fanatical devotion, and sectarian persecution created a totalitarian system unparalleled in its scope and brutality. Understanding the Nazi regime through the lens of the False Teacher construct not only provides a deeper insight into its mechanisms of control but also underscores the importance of recognizing and resisting similar dynamics in contemporary contexts. The inclusion of the False Teacher in the Dark Big 5 model enriches the study of dark personalities, offering a vital tool for analyzing the ideological and social dimensions of authoritarian regimes.

6.2 Testable Predictions of the Dark Big 5 Model

The study of dark personality traits has traditionally focused on the Dark Tetrad: Machiavellianism, Narcissism, Psychopathy, and Sadism. While this framework has provided valuable insights into antisocial behaviors, it falls short in accounting for certain patterns of harm rooted in ideological manipulation and authoritarianism. To address this gap, the Dark Big 5 framework introduces a fifth trait: the False Teacher, which is defined by the previously outlined Five False Frameworks.

Abnegationism: A Predictor of Cognitive Rigidity and Resistance to Change

Abnegationism reflects a rejection of alternative worldviews, contributing to cognitive rigidity and ideological entrenchment. This trait aligns with observable patterns in belief persistence and cognitive dissonance, even when confronted with disconfirming evidence. Individuals scoring high in Abnegationism are hypothesized to exhibit a diminished likelihood of modifying their beliefs when confronted with contradictory evidence, reflecting cognitive rigidity.

This resistance to persuasion can be empirically tested through experimental studies that expose participants to disconfirming evidence on contentious topics, with belief shifts measured using pre- and post-exposure surveys. Additionally, Abnegationism is hypothesized to correlate with greater ideological polarization over time, suggesting that individuals with high scores in this trait may experience increased ideological entrenchment or radicalization. Longitudinal studies tracking participants' ideological stances can provide insights into how Abnegationism predicts stability or shifts in views. These investigations into Abnegationism's role in cognitive rigidity and polarization would inform strategies for reducing societal divisions and promoting adaptive, open-minded thinking in diverse contexts.

Conformism: A Marker of Susceptibility to Group Influence

Conformism denotes an individual's propensity to enforce or conform to uniformity, a trait with profound implications for group dynamics, societal cohesion, and authoritarian tendencies. It reflects a tendency to align with prevailing norms or expectations, often at the expense of individual autonomy or ethical considerations. Higher levels of Conformism are predicted to correlate with increased susceptibility to social pressures, including compliance with morally ambiguous or unethical directives. This conformity can manifest in various settings, from workplace hierarchies to broader societal structures, where individuals prioritize group harmony or obedience over critical evaluation. Additionally, individuals with high Conformism are hypothesized to show a

marked preference for authoritarian leadership styles, valuing stability and order over pluralism and dissent.

These hypotheses can be empirically tested through established experimental paradigms such as variations of the Asch conformity experiment and Milgram's obedience studies, which assess behavioral responses to group norms and authority figures. Survey-based studies could further examine leadership preferences and their alignment with participants' levels of Conformism, offering insights into how this trait shapes governance and organizational behavior. The findings from such research would deepen our understanding of Conformism as a driver of authoritarianism and its broader societal implications. By illuminating the mechanisms behind blind obedience and the preference for centralized authority, these insights could guide strategies to foster critical thinking, individual agency, and ethical decision-making, ultimately supporting more resilient and inclusive social systems.

Dogmatism: Unquestioning Certainty and Epistemic Closure

Dogmatism is characterized by an unwavering certainty in one's beliefs, fostering epistemic closure, diminished intellectual flexibility, and an often combative resistance to alternative perspectives. This trait is hypothesized to inversely correlate with intellectual humility, which involves recognizing the limits of one's knowledge, and with openness to experience, a personality dimension associated with curiosity and adaptability. Individuals high in Dogmatism are also expected to exhibit an increased reliance on cognitive biases, such as confirmation bias, whereby they disproportionately seek and interpret information in ways that reinforce preexisting beliefs.

These relationships can be empirically examined using personality inventories, such as the Rokeach Dogmatism Scale, alongside validated measures of intellectual humility and openness to experience to uncover statistical patterns and causal pathways. Additionally, experimental tasks designed to evaluate information-seeking behavior, such as presenting conflicting evidence in a controlled setting, can measure the extent to which individuals selectively attend to confirming rather than disconfirming evidence.

Research in this area could inform the development of educational interventions aimed at promoting epistemic humility and critical thinking skills, both of which are essential for navigating complex social and ideological landscapes. By identifying how Dogmatism interacts with cognitive biases and rigidity, such efforts could help mitigate the effects of ideological polarization and reduce the societal impact of rigid belief systems. This work is particularly relevant in ideologically charged or polarized

societies, where fostering intellectual flexibility and tolerance for dissenting viewpoints can strengthen democratic discourse and enhance collaborative problem-solving.

Fanaticism: Extreme Dedication and Behavioral Risk-Taking

Fanaticism encompasses extreme dedication to a cause, often resulting in heightened risk-taking behaviors. Fanaticism is hypothesized to predict a greater willingness to engage in risky behaviors for ideological purposes, reflecting a deep commitment to advancing a cause regardless of personal cost. This ideological risk-taking can be assessed through simulated decision-making tasks designed to evaluate participants' likelihood of taking risks framed within the context of achieving a broader mission or goal. Additionally, Fanaticism is expected to correlate with heightened intrinsic motivation, whereby individuals pursue their objectives with unwavering determination, and a reduced responsiveness to extrinsic deterrents such as penalties or societal disapproval.

Experimental designs manipulating motivational contexts, such as comparing intrinsic versus extrinsic incentives, can provide a nuanced understanding of behavioral persistence in fanatical individuals. These findings would contribute to a deeper understanding of the psychological mechanisms underlying extremism and ideological devotion, offering critical insights into the motivations that drive individuals toward potentially harmful or extreme actions. Such research holds significant implications for developing evidence-based interventions aimed at mitigating the risks associated with ideologically motivated violence and fostering resilience against radicalization.

Sectism: Social Isolation and Persecution Dynamics

Sectism reflects the tendency to socially isolate dissenters and enforce in-group/out-group distinctions, making it a critical construct for examining social exclusion and intergroup conflict. This construct underscores how rigid boundaries between groups can perpetuate discrimination, marginalization, and social fragmentation. High Sectism scores are predicted to correlate with an increased likelihood of excluding dissenters from group membership, a behavior that can be tested through role-playing experiments designed to assess participants' decisions to include or exclude nonconformists in various scenarios. Furthermore, Sectism is hypothesized to predict higher levels of intergroup hostility and in-group favoritism, relationships that can be investigated using social identity theory paradigms to explore how Sectism influences discriminatory behaviors and social cohesion.

These findings would provide valuable insights into the psychological underpinnings of prejudice and exclusion, shedding light on the mechanisms that drive social division and conflict. By addressing the role of Sectism in shaping group dynamics, this research could inform strategies to reduce bias and foster inclusivity within communities, workplaces, and other organizational contexts. Such efforts are essential for creating equitable environments that encourage collaboration and mutual respect, even in the face of ideological or cultural differences. Ultimately, understanding and mitigating the effects of Sectism could contribute to building more harmonious and resilient social structures, promoting a sense of belonging and unity across diverse populations.

6.3 The Dark Big 5 Psychological Theory of Personality:

The Dark Big 5 framework provides a valuable lens for examining the interplay of dark personality traits and their combined influence on behavior. For instance, high scores in both Fanaticism and Dogmatism are hypothesized to predict a greater likelihood of engaging in ideologically motivated violence. This can be explored through surveys and behavioral experiments assessing participants' willingness to endorse or commit extreme acts. Similarly, Abnegationism and Sectism are predicted to jointly contribute to higher levels of intergroup conflict, a hypothesis that can be tested through cross-cultural studies analyzing how these traits shape societal divisions and hostilities. By investigating these interactions, the framework offers a nuanced understanding of how dark traits amplify destructive behaviors, providing critical insights for designing targeted interventions to mitigate polarization, violence, and social fragmentation. Such research holds promise for fostering more cohesive and resilient communities.

CHAPTER 7: Conclusion of The Dark Big 5 Psychological Theory of Personality

7.1 A False Teacher vs a True Teacher:

I would argue that a healthy pedagogy is grounded in a spirit of faith in humanity, an openness to diverse perspectives, and an unshakeable belief in the potential for shared growth. When I completed my Higher Education Teaching Certificate, I crafted what eventually became my teaching philosophy:

"I have faith in humanity. I believe that everyone can learn something new, anything new, in one way or another. I enjoy listening to students from all walks of life, and I have faith that we will be able to learn together because all humans are brilliant in one way or another. My 8th-grade science teacher often referred to the Eagle and

Fledglings statue, which proudly declares, 'Man's Flight Through Life is Sustained by the Power of His Knowledge.' On that note, I look forward to helping students spread those wings of knowledge and soar. This is where the fun begins!"

My personal teaching philosophy, which is based on several anthropic pedagogical frameworks, is essentially that every individual possesses the capacity for brilliance and that the power of curiosity about knowledge is, in fact, an antidote of sorts to the Five False Frameworks. If we all work together, fostering environments of inclusivity, curiosity, and mutual respect, we can empower learners to spread their wings of knowledge but also dismantle the ideological rigidity that fuels the False Teacher mindset.

Embracing Diversity to Counter Abnegationism

A healthy pedagogy celebrates the diversity of thought, culture, and experience as essential to the learning process. It actively counters Abnegationism by encouraging students to explore and value alternative worldviews. I believe that through open dialogue, and exposure to diverse perspectives, students can gain a greater appreciation for complexity and nuance. For example, a classroom that prioritizes collaborative projects across cultural or ideological boundaries enables students to see the world through multiple lenses. While the False Teacher wants to dismiss differences, I believe that instilling empathy in students by seeking to understand them and giving them space to understand one another.

Promoting Curious Thought to Challenge Conformism

Healthy pedagogy equips students with the tools to think critically and independently, thereby resisting the imposition of uniformity. I believe that by cultivating curiosity, and encouraging thoughtful lines of questioning, educators, teachers, and educational aides can empower students to evaluate ideas on their merit, as opposed to conforming to external pressures. For instance, an educator could help students celebrate diversity of thought by presenting case studies that require learners to analyze complex problems, debate solutions, and articulate their own conclusions. Through these practices, students become not only learners but also thinkers capable of resisting coercive uniformity.

Encouraging Intellectual Humility to Dismantle Dogmatism

To counteract Dogmatism, healthy pedagogy emphasizes intellectual humility—that ideas should be approached inquisitively instead of enforced through

inquisition. Teachers can model this by acknowledging their own fallibility and showing a willingness to learn from their students. Furthermore, my thought is that student discussions can be geared to curiously examining ideas, instead of being blindly accepted as immutable truths. For instance, a teacher could give a space for empathy and understanding to opposing viewpoints by hosting debates where students can "steel-man", or defend positions they do not personally hold.

Fostering Passion Without Fanaticism

Healthy pedagogy celebrates passion for learning and discovery while discouraging the extremism associated with Fanaticism. In order to give passion a healthy space to grow, a teacher can work to style education as a journey to share, rather than an all-encompassing crusade. This can help keep the classroom eager, in a way that is balanced and constructive. I believe that hearing the stories of other people, like Dr. Raymond Damadian who invented the MRI, can help students see that what they learn can result in creating technologies that can help all of the people that they love. This approach encourages learners to channel their energy into pursuits that are meaningful yet grounded in respect for others and the broader community.

Building Inclusive Communities to Counter Sectism

Healthy pedagogy actively works to be there for students; a healthy learning environment is one where every single student feels valued and supported, countering the isolation and exclusivity fostered by trait Sectism. Educators have a sacred duty to ensure that no student is marginalized. Teachers, while still valuing each student as an individual, can celebrate collective achievement and replace the divisive tendencies of Sectism with unity and love for one another.

In embodying the belief that every individual has the potential to soar through the power of knowledge, healthy pedagogy offers a powerful antidote to the False Teacher personality. A healthy pedagogical foundation is key because education is liberation, is growth, and is connection. As the Eagle and Fledglings statue reminds us, humanity's flight through life is sustained by knowledge, and through thoughtful pedagogy, educators can help learners spread their wings and soar.

7.2 Nurturing the Nature of the Dark Big 5:

The Dark Tetrad traits—Machiavellianism, narcissism, psychopathy, and sadism—are deeply rooted in genetics and have been linked to specific neurological circuits. Research suggests that variations in brain structures and functions contribute

to the expression of these traits. “The Dark factor was best explained by genetic and unique environmental factors when sex and age effects were removed...These results suggest that further behavior genetic studies should be conducted on the common and unique variances of the Dark Triad.” (59) These circuits influence emotional regulation, empathy, and moral reasoning, which are often diminished in individuals with Dark Tetrad tendencies. “Studies involving twins have shown that there are heritable components to traits like psychopathy and narcissism, indicating that genetics contribute to the likelihood of exhibiting these behaviors.” (60) Understanding this genetic and neurological basis helps provide insight into how these traits manifest and why they may persist across different contexts and populations.

Psychological research indicates that individuals with Dark Tetrad traits can, to some extent, learn to manage their tendencies and lead healthier lives. Therapy approaches, such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), can help them develop greater self-awareness and improve emotional regulation. While traits like empathy and moral reasoning may be limited, behavioral interventions and consistent practice can encourage more prosocial behavior and reduce harmful tendencies. (61)

7.3 What Can We Do In a Dark Big 5 World?

Understanding personality and engaging in self-authoring provides a powerful framework for individuals to withstand and recover from encounters with those exhibiting Dark Big 5 traits—Machiavellianism, Narcissism, Psychopathy, Sadism, and the False Teacher. Awareness of one’s personality helps individuals recognize their strengths, limitations, and stress responses, equipping them to better handle manipulative, exploitative, or harmful behaviors. This self-knowledge fosters resilience by enabling individuals to set boundaries, make intentional decisions, and maintain their sense of self in challenging interpersonal dynamics. (62)

Self-authoring amplifies these benefits by offering a structured approach to processing adverse experiences. Through reflective writing, individuals can analyze their encounters with Dark Big 5 traits, disentangle complex emotions, and therefore reframe their understanding of these interactions in a way that gives them greater conceptual mapping, i.e. understanding can help them feel braver. Research shows that writing about traumatic events not only promotes both physical and psychological healing but also enhances cognitive clarity and emotional regulation. This process strengthens an individual’s ability to resist undue influence, providing them with the clarity to identify false narratives or exploitative patterns propagated by those embodying the False Teacher archetype. (63)

Together, the integration of personality insights and self-authoring equips individuals to navigate the complexities of manipulative or destructive traits with confidence and clarity. By fostering self-awareness and emotional resilience, these tools empower individuals to rebuild their lives, cultivate meaningful relationships, and contribute to healthier social environments, ultimately neutralizing the impact of the Dark Big 5. This dual approach underscores the importance of self-knowledge and narrative agency as foundational elements for personal growth and societal harmony. (64)

In conclusion, the Dark Big 5 Psychological Theory of Personality represents a significant evolution in our understanding of malevolent personality traits, extending the Dark Tetrad by introducing the False Teacher as a critical fifth element. One more pragmatic aspect of my thesis was my assertion that cultivating self-awareness through an understanding of biological temperament and engaging in self-authoring can empower individuals to withstand or recover from encounters with those exhibiting these traits. By fostering a resilient identity and aligning with personal ideals, individuals can mitigate the destructive influences of the Dark Big 5, which I believe is one of the keys to healthier interpersonal dynamics and stronger communities. I believe that this work helps to underscore the importance of bridging psychological theory with actionable strategies, which can offer a pathway for both understanding and addressing dark personalities in pedagogical settings and in modern society.

*Those who grovel at the feet of the powerful
have no right to call themselves educators!*

-Henry Henderson

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